Friends Against SCAMS

Government Counter Fraud AWARDS 2019 SHORTLISTED

NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS
Scams Team

FED UP WITH SCAMS?

Become a Scam Marshal

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals

Scam Marshal Scheme

Are you, or someone you know, inundated with scam mail? Are you tempted to respond to it? Do you want to help track down the criminals behind scams and help put a stop to their activities?

If you answered yes to any of the above then why not become a Scam Marshal for the National Trading Standards (NTS) Scams Team.

The NTS Scams Team is funded by National Trading Standards and was founded in 2012 to tackle the problem of postal, telephone and doorstep scams. The team works across England and Wales with trading standards and partner agencies to investigate scams and identify and support those who fall victim to them.

A Scam Marshal is any resident in the UK who has been targeted by a scam and now wants to fight back and take a stand against scams. Scam Marshals do this by sharing your own experiences, helping others to report and recognise scams and sending any scam mail that you receive to the NTS Scams Team so that it can be utilised as evidence in future investigative and enforcement work. We need you.

Why should you become a Scam Marshal?

We hope that by becoming a Scam Marshal you feel empowered by fighting back against the criminals behind the scams. By taking a stand against scams you will become part of the team stopping the scams! Scam Marshals feel happy to be part of 'a bigger scheme to stop the mail'.

- Scam Marshals often feel empowered after joining the scheme and sending their mail into the team instead of to the criminals.
- Many Scam Marshals report an improvement in their wellbeing after becoming involved in the scheme.
- Becoming a Scam Marshal will give you the opportunity to talk to people in your community about scams and how they can protect themselves from scams, forming new friendships along the way.
- 94% of Scam Marshals believe that being a Scam Marshal has stopped them from being scammed again.
- 89% of Scam Marshals tell us that the amount of scam mail that they receive has reduced since they joined the scheme.

Six weeks worth of scam mail from when Graham first became a Scam Marshal.

Six weeks worth of scam mail from Graham six months after he became a Scam Marshal.

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals

Feedback from Scam Marshals

"Since trading standards have been to see me, I have been able to save £40 a month from my pension and I now have £430 saved on my card ready to pay the bills when they come in."
Ruby

"Best thing about the scheme is knowing that something is being done about it [scam mail]."
George

"The amount of scam mail I receive has reduced from 20-30 letters a week to just 2-3 a week."
Betty

"Since becoming a marshal I have saved roughly £3,000 and the amount of scam mail I receive has dramatically reduced."
Graham

What will you get?

- A certificate confirming your role as an NTS Scams Team Scam Marshal.
- A monthly newsletter that will include highlights and information about what the NTS Scams Team has done with the mail you have sent in.
- A freepost mail bag on a monthly basis to allow you to send your scam mail into the team at no cost to you.
- The opportunity to become a NTS Scams Team "Pen Pal", a pen pal project just for Scam Marshals!

Your Role

You can take a stand against scams in your own way and do not have to carry out any set activities, however below are some suggestions for what you may want to do to get involved:

- Using information from the monthly newsletter (and this pack) talk to your neighbours and friends about scams and help them to be scam aware or even become Scam Marshals themselves.
- Use your monthly freepost envelopes to send scam mail you receive into NTS Scams Team. Remember to date when you received the mail and to send back the envelopes the mail came in along with any envelopes you are asked to send money in.
- Contact your local Neighbourhood Watch group and talk to them about scams and scams awareness.
- Find out what Friends Against Scams is doing in your area (check out www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk) and get involved.
- Write to your local MP about scams and ask that they bring the issue of scams to parliament's attention. (Sample letter attached).
- Put up posters in your local community advertising the Scam Marshal scheme (please contact the NTS Scams Team for these).
- Organise a scams awareness coffee morning to talk about scams to your local community.

Remember it's up to you to do as much or as little as you want as a Scam Marshal.

Scam Marshals will be asked to provide their contact details so they can receive monthly freepost labels and the newsletter.

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals

Scam Marshal sign up form

By registering as a National Trading Standards (NTS) Scam Marshal I agree for any mail I send to the NTS Scams Team to be used for investigations into the perpetrators of scams or to be used as evidence in law enforcement proceedings. I understand that my personal data will not be shared for any other reason than the above and will not be shared with third parties. I agree to be contacted by NTS Scams Team on a monthly basis with a newsletter about scams and how to protect myself. I also agree to be contacted from time to time about my activities as a Scam Marshal.

Have you ever responded to scam mail? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Have you ever lost money to scam mail? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

If 'Yes', how much? .....

How much scam mail do you receive a week? WB2,5

Do you know how to spot a scam? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ WB3

Do scams make you feel unsafe at home? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ WB4

Do you know where to get help with scams? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ WB3

Do scams make you feel unhappy? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ WB1

Do you currently feel that you are susceptible to falling for a scam? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

POSTCODE .....

PHONE NO .....

Once completed please send to **'Freepost NTSST Mail Marshal' (no need for a stamp)**

WB Relates to the well-being survey, WB1 = Wellbeing statement 1. To be recorded by scams team.

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals

Template letter for writing to your Member of Parliament

[Your Address]

[MP's Name
Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
Postcode]

[Date]

Dear [MP's name],

I am writing to ask for your help in bringing the issue of scams to a national audience. Scams or mass marketing fraud, cost the UK £5-10 billion a year and cause untold distress to victims. Scams may be particularly targeted at those members of our society that are the most vulnerable due to their circumstances; the socially isolated, those living with cognitive impairments such as dementia, those who have recently been bereaved or those with health conditions. According to Age UK, over 50% of people aged 65 or over have been targeted by scams but of those who did fall victim, only 5% report the crime.

[Say something here that describes why you are interested in scams, including if you have been scammed, a family member who has been scammed or another connection. If you have any information about the prevalence of scams in your local area write about it here.]

[Tell your MP what your main concern(s) about scams are in your area. For example, these might be about getting support from local services or providing better messaging about scams and how to protect yourself and others. Try to keep this short, with just one or two main points.]

I would also very much like to hear your comments on this issue. You can contact me at [email/ home address] or [telephone]. Thank you for your help with this matter, I look forward to your response.

Yours Sincerely

[Your Name]

Useful information about scams

Where to get help

Friends Against Scams

Friends Against Scams is a NTS Scams Team initiative, which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering communities to "Take a Stand Against Scams". On the website, you can access information on how to spot a scam or a scam victim and guidance on how to protect yourself and others from scams. You can become a Friend Against Scams or even a SCAMchampion as well as a Scam Marshal. If you cannot access the website please contact your local trading standards for more information about Friends Against Scams.

www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk

Action Fraud

Action Fraud is the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cyber-crime where you should report fraud if you have spotted a scam or have been scammed, defrauded or experienced cyber crime.

You can call **Action Fraud** on **0300 123 20 40**

www.actionfraud.police.uk

Citizens Advice Consumer Service

Citizens Advice Consumer Service can offer support if you or someone you know has been scammed. They will give you advice on what to do next.

You can call **Citizens Advice Consumer Service** on **03454 04 05 06**

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Age UK

Age UK run a Freephone service offering advice and information on money, care and health. Your local Age UK may offer scams support for people in your area.

You can call **Age UK** on **0800 055 6112**

www.ageuk.org.uk

The Police

If you encounter a person carrying out a doorstep scam and their behaviour is threatening then you can call the emergency services for immediate support. Beware of calls claiming to be from banks or the police asking you to move money, always call your local police if you receive one of these calls.

You can call the **emergency services** on **999**

You can call your **local police force** on **101**

www.police.uk

Scam facts

Here are some key stats about scams.

Scams are fraud.
Fraud is a crime.
All scams are crimes.

£5-10
BILLION A YEAR
The cost to the UK economy

53%
of people aged 65 and over have been targeted by a scam

37%
of people have been targeted by a scam five times or more

45%
of people have taken no action to protect themselves against scams in the last 12 months

5%
of scam victims report the matter to law enforcement

22%
of victims don't tell anyone as they feel too embarrassed

65%
have taken no action to protect friends and family

How to protect yourself and others

You can prevent yourself from receiving junk mail. Junk mail is untargeted advertising materials, it will usually be addressed to The Home Owner or The Occupier instead of to an individual. To help reduce the amount of junk mail you receive register for free with the Mail Preference Service. **The Mailing Preference Service (MPS)** is a free service to enable you to have your name and home addresses in the UK removed from lists used by the advertising industry. This is only for junk mail, this service cannot remove scam mail.

Register on the **MPS** by calling **0207 291 3310**

To help stop scam phone calls register for free with the **Telephone Preference Service**.

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is a free service. It is a legal requirement that all organisations (including charities, voluntary organisations and political parties) do not make calls to numbers registered on the TPS unless they have your consent to do so. Some scams pose as the TPS and may contact you requesting you to renew your TPS registration at a cost. Remember the TPS is a free service and any call trying to charge you for it is a scam.

Contact the **TPS** on **0345 070 0707**

If you still receive lots of scam calls you may want to invest in a call blocker. A call blocker is a small device that plugs into your phone and allows you to block calls from unwanted numbers. Your local trading standards service may be able to provide you with a call blocker or offer advice on the best one for you.